



Michigan Women's Commission Public Meeting Minutes
Traverse City, MI
Tuesday, August 9, 2022
1:00 PM-3:00 PM

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

- Commissioners Present: Chair Dr. Sabala Mandava, Lisa Cawley, Charity Dean, Tamara Faber, Karin Hopman, Katie Horvath, Muna Jondy, Vivian Pickard, Kelli Saunders, Sue Townsel
- Commissioners Absent: Danielle Atkinson, Dr. Tracy Joshua, Faye Nelson, Misti Rice, Dr. Geneva Williams
- Guests Present: Camille Hoisington of Traverse Connect, Barb Termaat of Newton's Road Northwest, Jody Trietch of Boomerang Catapult LLC and of Northern Michigan Angels, Kristina Bajtka of United Way of Northwest Michigan, Seth Johnson of United Way of Northwest Michigan
- Staff Present: Chief Executive Officer Cheryl Bergman, Student Assistant Olivia Howard

II. Approval of Agenda

- Agenda approved by consent.

III. Guest Speakers: STEM Panel with Camille Hoisington, Director of Ecosystem Development for Traverse Connect; Barb Termaat, M. Ed., Executive Director of Newton's Road Northwest; and Jody Trietch, CPA, CFO for Boomerang Catapult LLC and Executive Director of Northern Michigan Angels

- Commissioner Horvath introduced the panelists and framed a conversation around encouraging more women to enter the STEM field (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) because of the higher-paying and higher-visibility job opportunities.
- Horvath shared a video – [20Fathoms | Traverse City, Michigan](#) – about tech development in the Traverse City region.
- Horvath facilitated a general conversation between MWC Commissioners and panelists about women and the STEM career field, efforts underway to establish Traverse City as a center for tech talent, the diversity of tech company boards, attracting STEM talent through tourism, and partnering with organizations around the state serving STEM women.
- Guests excused.

IV. Chief Executive Officer's Report: CEO Bergman

- Bergman announced the reappointments of Commissioners Charity Dean, Muna Jondy and Dr. Geneva Williams, the appointment of Commissioner Dr. Sabala Mandava as MWC Chair, and the appointments of new Commissioners Lisa Cawley and Sue Townsel.
 - Commissioners Lisa Cawley and Sue Townsel were given time to introduce themselves.

- Bergman requested that all Commissioners submit photo and biography updates for the website as soon as possible.
- Bergman reported that the Michigan Women’s Commission Bipartisan Legislative Council (Council) met on June 6. Michelle Richards from the Governor’s Executive Office joined to talk about the Governor’s Caring for MI Future plan to build more child care availability throughout the state. Commissioner Rice spoke about MAGNA’s involvement as an employer with MWC’s MI Tri-Share Child Care program. Council meetings are on hold until early 2023, when new co-chairs are identified and MWC’s biannual Women Legislators Reception is scheduled.
- Bergman reported that the MI Tri-Share Child Care program is no longer a pilot. In the FY23 budget, the legislature allocated another \$2.5 million to the program and made it ongoing. The outside evaluation of the program, including focus groups, is continuing with Public Sector Consultants, with results expected in October. Statewide marketing plan is underway with billboards, radio, tv, and targeted ads; targeting employers first, then employees.
 - Commissioners discussed capturing stories from focus groups, sharing evaluation results with legislators, and potentially increasing future budget allocations to adequately support the full program.
- Bergman introduced guest speakers: Seth Johnson, Executive Director of United Way of Northwest Michigan, and Kristina Bajtka, Tri-Share Coordinator of United Way of Northwest Michigan
 - Bergman facilitated a general conversation between MWC Commissioners and panelists about the United Way of Northwest Michigan’s participation in the MI Tri-Share Child Care program as the regional facilitator hub serving ten counties in the northwestern lower peninsula, child care and employment challenges specific to rural regions, issues raised by potential employer participants,

V. Chief Strategy Officer’s Report: CEO Bergman and Student Assistant Howard presenting for CSO Garrett

- Bergman shared that Garrett was unable to attend the meeting and introduced Student Assistant Olivia Howard to share an update on the MI Fostering Access, Rights and Equity (MI FARE) program.
- Howard reminded Commissioners that the MI FARE program is funded by a \$350,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Labor Women’s Bureau.
 - The goal is to help low wage-earning women access employment rights, public benefits that support working women and opportunities for education and skills that lead to higher-paying jobs.
 - MWC intends to reach 50,000 working women using two methods: (1) direct outreach in Southeast Michigan via MI FARE Navigator contracts with community partners Detroit Disability Power, Mothering Justice, and United Way for Southeastern Michigan, and (2) a statewide virtual education campaign via monthly webinars and social media.
 - The webinar schedule, along with links to resources and additional information, is on the MI FARE website at www.michigan.gov/fare.

VI. Report on Unlocking Opportunities Committee: Commissioner Saunders

- Saunders reminded Commissioners that the Unlocking Opportunities Committee focuses on removing barriers to work for women, concentrating at moment on three pillars: child care, paid leave, caregiving more generally.
- Saunders reported that the committee met on August 4 and heard presentations from:

- Michelle Richard with the Governor’s Executive Office about the 150,000 families who are now receiving child care that they were not receiving before the pandemic.
- Emily Laidlaw, Director of the Child Care Licensing at the MI Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) about the recent investments that have provided funding to over 630 childcare centers.
- Laidlaw also discussed the Caring for MI Future initiative, which seeks to establish 1,000 new or expanded child care programs by the end of 2024. Ninety new centers have opened since that program was announced at the beginning of the summer.
- Laidlaw shared that LARA will soon launch a new navigator website that makes starting your child care journey a “one stop shop” and will help people access child care step-by-step.
- Yula Truskinovshy, a professor at Wayne State University, presented on elder and adult caregiving trends since the pandemic and what is known about working people with caregiving responsibilities leaving the workforce or their challenges to remain in the workforce.
- Saunders shared that the committee is beginning to pivot attention toward other forms of caregiving, in addition to child care, that present barriers or challenges for women who wish to work, as well as ways to support professional and paid caregivers.

VII. Report on Visible Authentic Leadership Committee: CEO Bergman presenting for Commissioner Williams

- Bergman reported that the committee has not met since MWC’s April public meeting.
- Bergman shared that work continues with our state and community partners to create a database for finding opportunities to serve on public boards and commissions. MWC is working with the Michigan Community Service Commission to include local board and commission opportunities in the database it is currently building to match nonprofits with volunteers. The Women Officials Network has indicated interest in partnering to market this database specifically to women.
- Bergman reported that MWC is amplifying the Governor’s actions around reproductive freedom in Michigan, as well as connecting Commissioners to opportunities to author opinion articles and other media visibility.

VIII. Report on Financial Freedom Committee: CEO Bergman presenting for Commissioner Nelson

- Bergman reported that the committee has not met since MWC’s April public meeting and had no further updates at this time.

IX. Report on Committee on Implicit Bias Awareness: Chair Mandava

- Mandava reminded Commissioners that the Committee on Implicit Bias Awareness is primarily an internal committee to ensure that the Commission works through a lens of equity and with an understanding of the biases we hold.
- Mandava asked for Commissioner volunteers to host a fall cohort of the Commission’s 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge. Hosts would commit to receiving 21 daily emails and facilitating three weekly virtual meetings with participants to discuss their learnings. The cohort dates are flexible, but looking for three weeks in late October or early November.

X. Old Business

- Bergman confirmed the next public meeting is Tuesday, October 18, 2022, in Battle Creek. A meeting notice and agenda will be shared with Commissioners and posted to the Commission's website at least ten days ahead of the meeting.
- Bergman reported that 2023 meeting dates are forthcoming and will be determined at the October meeting.

XI. Approval of Minutes of April 12, 2022 Meeting

- Commissioner Saunders moved; Commissioner Jondy seconded. Minutes were approved.

XII. New Business

- No new business.

XIII. Next Meeting

- Next public meeting is Tuesday, October 18, 2022, in Battle Creek.

XIV. Ex Officio and Liaison Reports

- No Ex Officio or Liaison reports.

XV. Public Comment

- No public comment.

XVI. Meeting Adjourned